

THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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The Lost Debate

By F. B. M. Collier

UNCLE Jack, what is an icon?" Uncle Jack, toasting his feet over the open grate, looked up from his interesting book at his small twelve-year-old nephew and queried, "What are you reading, Maurice?"

"Oh, stories of the Greek Church, and speaks of the icons in the cathedrals." "Well, icon literally means image, but that small medallion-like cast hanging on the wall is more often called an icon. And you ever hear of an iconoclast, son?" "No, Uncle."

"Well, an iconoclast is a very interesting person, and sometimes very dangerous, and usually very unwise —"

But here the door burst open, and an older niece and nephew rushed in, followed more slowly by their sixteen-year-old brother. "O Uncle, isn't it a shame! Harry lost the debate," exclaimed young Murray.

"And, Uncle, his was the best speech of all. Why, the whole room clapped and cheered, and he was just fine, and then those silly judges decided in favor of the word."

"Come and sit down, and tell us all about it," Uncle Jack said kindly, patting a chair beside him for Harry. "Hard on old boy," he continued sympathetically, as he waited for the youthful debater to begin.

"Oh," volunteered Harry, "I wouldn't mind being beaten sometimes, but no matter what side I take I always lose. I never won a debate yet, and I've been eight. I don't know what's the matter."

"Nervous?"

"Oh, no," interrupted Ethel; "he's never a bit nervous. He's the finest debater in the school. Why, he just reads off wonderfully, and keeps everybody excited and interested."

"Well, a lot of good it does," grumbled Harry. "I always lose just the same."

"— read it! Do you always read your speech?" asked his uncle.

"Oh, yes; all the fellows do. We couldn't do anything else."

"Oh, I see," dubiously remarked his uncle. "Then you have it all written down? Might I see it?"

Harry produced his manuscript, written very legibly and neatly, and his uncle proceeded to read it.

"Umph! 'The pen is mightier than the sword,' and you were the first speaker on the affirmative, eh? Well, you had the best chance, undoubtedly, old boy."



Bows and Arrows

By ELEANOR HAMMOND

Robin Hood in days of old
Shot so straight and true
He could hit a willow rod,
Split it right in two!

Hiawatha had a bow
And he shot so well
That ten arrows left his bow
Ere the first one fell!

Oh, it's great to have a bow!
If I try each day
Maybe, after practicing,
I can shoot that way!

"Oh, I don't know. It's wonderful what desperately fine things they could say about the sword."

Uncle Jack paused to look up. "Yes, perhaps; but you had the advantage of position, just like the team that plays lacrosse with its back to the sun."

"Why, how? I don't understand, Uncle Jack."

"Well, just wait until I read this, and then we'll go into the matter," and Jack Morton proceeded to wade carefully through the pages until he had finished the last one. Then he laid the debate down, and remarked quizzically, "Didn't dream you were such a master of English, Hal; some pretty fine stuff there, eh?"

Harry blushed sheepishly. "Oh, well, of course Uncle Jack I didn't write it."

"Somebody else?" with innocent mildness.

"Oh, no. I gathered it from writers and the encyclopedia."

"Ah, I see. It sounded rather familiar, in spots, but how comes that, old man?" Uncle Jack's voice sounded so grave and disapproving that Harry rushed into an embarrassed, stammering defense.

"Oh, all the fellows do it. Why, we couldn't possibly know all we need for debates. We have to read all about it, and —"

"But you don't have to steal people's English. Aren't you supposed to read the subject up, and then argue it out yourselves, in your own words?"

"Oh, well, I suppose so, but it's so much easier to copy it out. Nobody ever thinks of writing it out themselves. People write out points for us, and we get others from books —"

But the look on Uncle Jack's face stopped Harry, and a nasty little silence fell upon the group. Then at last Uncle Jack spoke.

"Cut that out, old man, or stop debating. Don't be a thief. It's a hideous practice. I debated often as a boy, and I've heard many other boys debate, but when we quoted another man's words we at least had the grace to say so. Your debating has been a mere waste of time, and a nasty training in dishonesty. Drop it altogether, old man, or do the thing square. But that was not what I wanted

to discuss. If you all did the same thing there's another reason for your defeat, and I fancy you are inclined to be, — what, Maurice?"

Maurice looked up eagerly, puzzled. His uncle continued, "something interesting, perhaps dangerous —"

"Oh, I know! I know, Uncle, an iconoclast."

Uncle Jack laughed, and everybody said, "A what?"

"Iconoclast! Now go and look it up."

There was great excitement and chattering till they found the word in the dictionary, and triumphantly exclaimed, "Image-breaker!" Then they all tumbled back to Uncle Jack eager for what they called one of his jolly sermons.

"Yes, image-breaker. Now, how do you make a house?"

"Why, build it, of course," declared Ethel promptly, and the boys jeered at her.

"Right indeed, Ethel," conceded her uncle. "Now, how do you usually make weak people strong?"

"Build them up" guessed Ethel excitedly.

"The very thing. Now what do you usually do to microbes?"

"Kill them," shouted Maurice, eager to take a hand.

"Just so, and there you have two ways of helping public health: The building-up method; and the pulling-down method, or the killing method. In other words, the constructive and destructive methods. Do you understand?"

"Oh, yes, Uncle Jack; do go on," pleaded Ethel eagerly.

"Well, there are just two methods of doing your work all through life, the constructive and the destructive. Now, which do you think is the stronger, killing microbes to prevent disease, or building strong bodies to resist disease?"

They all looked puzzled, and Uncle Jack saw with satisfaction that a riot of debate was exercising each young mind.

"Well, you've all been at a lacrosse match —"

"You bet we have," fervently announced Maurice, and everybody laughed.

"Well, can you describe the object of the game in just a few words?"

They all looked thoughtful, and remained silent, trying to frame a good definition. Then at last Harry volunteered timidly, "Well, each side has a goal, and they try to put the ball in."

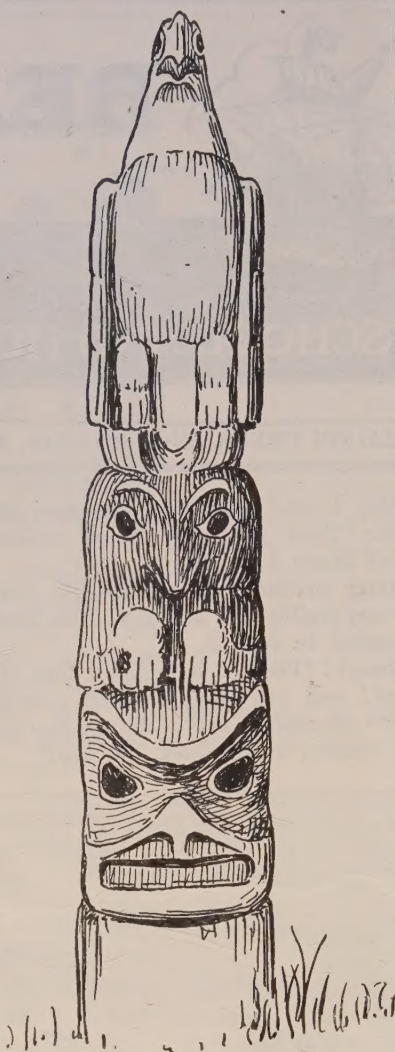
"Sure they don't just try to keep the other fellow from trying to put his in?"

"Oh, no, Uncle Jack," interrupted Maurice hotly; "that would be rank playing."

"Just so, Maurice. But suppose one team keeps the ball all down near their own net all the time, what happens to the other team?"

"Oh, well," Maurice broke in disgustedly, for he was the sport of the family,

(To third column)



The Invader

BY GERTRUDE FRISTOE

As Robber Bluejay stole his lunch
At Floragold one day,
He saw a sight that struck him dumb
On sunny Primrose Way.
'Twas neither mortal, beast nor bird,
And yet 'twas like all three!
He hopped upon a heather bush
To learn what it might be.

It stood there just as still as still,
And on its four, odd faces,
Which set his fighting blood a-thrill, —
Were sneers and rude grimaces!

"My topknot!" Bluejay grew quite bold,
"Now who in all creation
Has dared to come to Floragold
Without an invitation?
'Tis plain to me you came to steal,"
He shrilled, in manner haughty,
"And I will show you how I feel
Toward one who is so naughty."

The strange thing only stared and
stared,
And not a word it uttered!
Then Bluejay, just to show he dared,
Right down upon it fluttered.

"Take that — and that!" He roughly
pecked

An ear, an eye, a nose;
Then poised a saucy head to hear
The creature voice its woes.
But soon, alas! he found 'twas wood
On which he dulled his beak,
And from his angry throat arose
One loud, disgusted shriek.

At this the fraud reeled to and fro,
And with a sudden movement
It dealt Bluejay a stinging blow
And both rolled to the pavement!

A laugh rang out through Floragold
As Bluejay slunk away,
And never has his face been seen
In that town to this day.
No doubt he learned a lesson from
The town's new Totem Pole,
And now repents his wicked ways
And lunches that he stole.

The Lost Debate

(From first column)

"then they've got to play a block game."
"And is the team that's forced to play
a block game the stronger?"

"Why, no, certainly not, Uncle Jack."

"Well, now here is this debate. Harry's goal was the pen, the other chap's was the sword. Each of you were to score for your own side, but I find Harry's debate is nearly all taken up with belittling the sword, playing a block game, keeping the sword from scoring. Yet he was the first spokesman, and had a splendid chance to run up a big score for his own side before the other began." Uncle paused, but they all remained breathlessly silent, waiting for him to continue.

"Indeed, from the way Harry's speech reads I should be inclined to think the debate read. 'The Sword is Weaker than the Pen.' Harry spends all his time proving how weak the sword is, whereas he is supposed to prove how mighty the pen is. In other words he has played a block game all through, and no doubt the other side played a constructive game?"

"Oh, yes, that's just what they did. They spent all their time telling what grand things the sword did."

"And that's just why they won. You see the destructive method is helpful if worked out along with the constructive, but it spells ruin if used entirely alone. That's why Russia is in such a muddle today. Everybody went wild over the abuses of the monarchy, and everybody yelled, 'Tear it down.' So they did, but they had no men really ready to take the places of the men they killed, and build up a government better than that they destroyed. It was the same in the French Revolution, in the abolition of slavery, and many other tragic reforms. People hurried to destroy a bad system when some system was necessary, and then they

ound they had no system at all to take its place, and there was great suffering until a new order had time to grow, or could be thought out. Destruction is excellent very often. You must kill the terms of a plague in a dying man, but you must also be able to build up the weak spots its ravages have made in his system. Construction must go hand in hand with destruction to get success. Do you understand, children?"

"Yes, Uncle Jack; do go on."

"Well, I think I heard mother getting upper, — didn't you? — and we must remember off to clean up. But just remember: construction is mightier than

destruction; to create is better than to annihilate; life is greater than death. If you want to get rid of a thing the quickest way is to put something better up as a rival. If you hate rag-time (and he winked at Ethel) don't forbid it, but crowd it out by exploiting classical music. It's far wiser to make the nice things fashionable than to waste all your time abusing the bad things. Build up, build up, build up all that is fine and lovely and excellent, and a good strong flourishing growth will always choke out dead wood and fungi, and now, — away off, all of you," and with a very youthful bound Uncle Jack fled from the room.



THE CROW'S NEST

BY
WAITSTILL
HASTINGS
SHARP

Text: He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. —Matthew 5:45.

YEARS and years ago in France, when people thought a man had stolen some money or done something else wrong, they took him and put him in jail and then they took him before a court and "tried" him, as we say today, to find out whether he was the robber or the bad man. They had all kinds of queer ways of finding out. Sometimes the man had to walk on red-hot coals, and if he cried out the people said, "God is burning him and he is guilty!" Sometimes he was tied all up in ropes and dropped into the river, and if he floated the people said: "God's river won't hold him. He is guilty!" (So you had to be thrown if you wanted to prove yourself innocent!) Sometimes he was dressed in armor and was given a sword or a great axe and had to fight with another man dressed in armor and using a sword. And the people said, "If he is beaten that proves that God doesn't like him and he is guilty."

Do we have courts like that today? How would you like to be tried like that?

These are queer old customs which we think today were very harsh and cruel. And yet if we look at their origin (the way they started) we see one fact that is true of all of them. What is it?

It is this — that all these three cruel ways to prove whether a man was guilty or not started from religion — from what the people in the Middle Ages thought about God. They thought that God ran

people as men run an engine, and that he had different laws for different people — that the feet of the good man would not burn when he walked on live coals and that the good man would always win a battle with swords because God would make him stronger.

We know that this is not true. We know that often good people are not as strong as bad people — and so we have policemen with guns and clubs who walk along the streets at night to protect the good people. We also know that the feet of a good person will burn just as quickly on red-hot coals as those of a bad person, and that some good people will sink and some good people will float in the water.

When you throw a baseball into the air what happens? It falls to the ground. Did you ever see it fly up to the moon? No. A baseball and everything else that is heavier than air will fall unless it is held up or pushed like an airplane. Do you know what we call something which always happens? We call it a LAW. We say: "It is a LAW that things heavier than air fall to the ground unless held up in the air." So we say: "It is a LAW that every one's feet will be burnt by live coals," and "It is a LAW that thin people who are tied up in ropes and don't hold their breath will sink and fat people who hold their breath will float."

Ignorant and selfish people pray to God to change his great laws just for them. Then when they lose what they want, they say, "I can't believe in God." God did not plan us to be petted and babied all our lives. Rain falls on the dry farm of the bad man and frost on the grapes of the righteous. God's great laws hurt every one who gets in their way — even if a person gets in their way through no fault of his own, like the men of the Middle Ages who had to walk over coals or fight stronger men to prove that they were innocent. What we must do is to learn what God's laws are and how they work. Then we must see how to keep out of the way of the laws which are bad for us to get in the way of, and see how we can work with the laws which are good for us.



THE BOOKSHELF

Books suggested by Miss Elsie L. Lustig.

I have just read a very good story about a lady who lost a white cat. Several days later "Tom Snow," as the cat was called, was returned to his mistress by a milkboy. ("Tom Snow," incidentally, having been dyed pink in the interim!) The milkboy received a promised reward of thirty dollars, and the owner of the cat thought it was "easy money." But if you read this yarn you will think that Dick Randall worked pretty hard before he succeeded in returning the cat to its mistress. This, as well as two other stories, — "A Mean March Wind" and "Gobble, Gobble, Gobble," were written by Russell Gordon Carter who was for a short time Editor of *The Beacon*. All these, as well as stories and poems by other authors, are contained in *THE BOY SCOUTS' YEAR BOOK*.

I think we are all glad to hear there is a new book this autumn by Thornton W. Burgess. *JERRY MUSKRAT AT HOME*, and it is one of the "Smiling Pool" series. Jerry was always very, very busy, and poor Peter Rabbit couldn't understand why Jerry took so much pains in building his new house in Smiling Pool, or why he bothered to store up food for the winter — I won't tell you any more. I know you will like the story, and probably you have already read many other books by this writer. I remember once, several years ago, I went to a lecture where Mr. Burgess was the speaker. Every once in a while he would ask questions about various characters in his books — and twenty or thirty children would answer at a time. And since then I have always felt that all of you know Thornton Burgess, and that he really needs no introduction to you.

Discovery

BY JOHN RICHARD MORELAND

Before I knew that words
Were birds,
I set no cage about my mouth, —
My words flew east, west, north
and south.

Before I knew that deeds
Were seeds,
I gave no care that they should be
Only of truth and charity.

But now I know that words and deeds,
Like birds and seeds,
Will fly or drift back home to me,
And may I greet them with a shout,
Not bar my heart to keep them out.



THE BEACON CLUB

THE EDITOR'S POST BOX

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

1234 EAST 13TH ST.,
DES MOINES, IOWA.

Dear Editor: I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and enjoy it very much. I always read the letters and enjoy them just as much as I enjoy the stories. I am nine years old. I wish some girl of my age would write to me. I go to the Unitarian Church in Des Moines and am in the fourth grade.

Yours sincerely,
EVELYN ANDERSON.

21 COUNTY ST.,
DEDHAM, MASS.

Dear Beacon Club: I am only seven years old, but I should like very much to join the Club and have a pin. I am in the third grade at school. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school. Our minister's name is Mr. Joy. He is going to leave us soon and we all feel very bad about it, for I don't think the other minister would be as fond of children. I hope he is.

Your new member,
JEAN SPERS.

37 PARROTT ST.,
LYNN, MASS.

Dear Editor: I am eleven years old and attend the Unitarian Sunday school every Sunday, also church. I have been present every Sunday for three years. Our minister's name is Mr. Ferrell; he tells us very interesting stories every Sunday. I was in a Christmas pageant at our church.

Sincerely yours,
THELMA BARRETT.

315 W. GARFIELD AVE.,
GLENDALE, CALIF.

Dear Editor: I should like to join the Beacon Club. I am eight years old and am in the fourth grade at school. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school in Los Angeles. Glendale is six miles from Los Angeles. I am interested in collecting stamps.

Yours truly,
ROBERT KIMBALL.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.
OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.
OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

THE CUBS' COLUMN

Dear Cubs: Here is an interesting story about one of our popular winter birds, written by a member of our Club in Chestnut Hill, Mass. Will not other members tell us of their experiences in making friends with the birds? In these snowy days, when it is so difficult for our little out-of-door friends to find food, let us help them in every way we can. Why not use your Christmas tree as an after-Christmas tree for the birds?

THE BEACON CLUB EDITOR.

The Black-Capped Chickadee

BY ELLEN KENNEDY (AGE 14)

The chickadees are very active birds during the snowy, cold days. They are the most popular birds we have. They come to the window sills where there are feasts prepared for them, and also they are the tamest birds around. Personally, I have had them come and eat out of my hand. Many people have the birds come to their windows. The nests are usually placed in a hollow stump, at the bottom.

The chickadee is not afraid to introduce himself as he sings his name, "Chick-a-dee-dee!" over and over again at his work. Oftentimes he sings "Phoe-be." He is about $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length, and he has a black cap and neck; his back is grey and the under part of his body is a greyish yellow.

638 RODONDO AVE.,
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Dear Editor: I am nine years old. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school. My teacher is Mrs. Rice. I get *The Beacon* every Sunday and enjoy it very much. We are going to have a new church and should like any of the members to join it if they ever come to Salt Lake City. I should like to have some little girl about my age write to me.

Very truly yours,
MARY JOSEPHINE BAER.

PUZZLERS

A Diamond

- 1—a letter in grandmother.
- 1-2-7—appropriate, ready.
- 1-3-3-1-8—hangings covering the walls of a room.
- 1-2-3-4-5-6-7—a delicious fruit.
- 7-1-5-4-7—implied but not stated outright.
- 7-6-7—a confirmed durnkard.
- 7—a letter in grandfather.

E. D. A.

Twisted Trees

- 1. Plame.
- 2. Chihir.
- 3. Hebec.
- 4. Kmehleco.
- 5. Rpusce.

MARGARET HALL.

Answers to Puzzles in No. 13

Enigma.—Ye have not passed this way heretofore.

Anagram Verse.—“Only a night from old to new,
Only a sleep from night to morn.
The new is but the old come true;
Each sunrise sees a new year born.”

Twisted Capitals of States.—1. Santa Fe. 2. Salem. 3. Jackson. 4. Columbus. 5. Denver. 6. Boston. 7. Madison. 8. Frankfort. 9. Augusta. 10. Lansing.

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